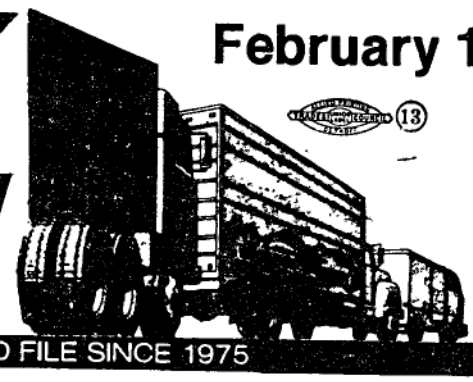
TEAMSTERS REFORM UNION

CONVOY DISPATCH



February 1986
#59

VOICE OF THE TEAMSTER RANK AND FILE SINCE 1975

Countdown!

In only two months our union will be meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada to decide leadership and direction for the coming five years. The countdown is on for members and officers to decide whether this convention will be a step forward for our union, or one more rubber stamp for Presser.

Since the 1981 Convention the clock has ticked off setback after setback for our union, and some disturbing facts face all Teamsters at this time:

Fact: Our union is 200,000 members smaller than it was at the time of the 1981 convention. The International Union has no major organizing drives in cartage, freight, construction, warehousing or other major Teamster jurisdictions to fend off the growing nonunion sectors.

Fact: Our master contracts, once the backbone of our union's strength and Union members used to work together for better conditions. Now they are being pitted against each other by two-tier wages and other concessions. Tens of thousands of Teamsters have been pressured into signing individual deals with their employers for ESOP wage cuts, while the International has completely refused to bargain for them.

Fact: Members have had to defeat two contracts negotiated by Presser. In 1983 we turned back his "Relief Rider" to the NMFA by an 8-1 margin. In 1985 carhaulers sent back his first contract sellout by a margin of 4-1.

Fact: Even now, the most profitable Teamster employers continue to demand more and more concessions. Our International Union is standing by silently while union-busting is becoming as American as Spam.

Fact: The number of members who display confidence in our union is at an all time low, and confidence in our General President is nonexistent.

Fact: Accountability begins at home. Delegates from your local union will be attending the convention. Will they be cheerleaders for Presser's catastrophic course, or unionists committed to [illegible] are many officers who are all too familiar with the problems and know something must be done. Will they do something, or sit back so as not to "rock the boat"? The fact is that when a boat is sinking, it's time to bail out the water, plug the leaks and steer a new course.

The countdown is on. May 1986, could be a turning point for our union, or it could be another example of the lack of courage and foresight that has led us up to this point. The choice is up to us, and what we do in the coming months could make the difference.

Thousands of members have already done a tremendous job of distributing the Right to Vote Petition and making the right to vote an issue in their locals, but we have more to do. Here's what you can do to help:

1. Sign and distribute the Right to Vote Petition (order form on page 6).
2. Nail your local officials down on where they stand, and what they will do at the convention. Raise a motion at your local union meeting putting the local's membership on record in favor of the right to vote.
3. Support rank and file members running on reform slates in delegate [illegible] holding elections in the coming month, including Atlanta, Toledo, Detroit, Los Angeles, Louisville, and others. Your help, and your vote, are important.
4. Join TDU, and encourage others to join. Let other members know there is hope and there's an organization of Teamsters out there working to improve our union.

New Jersey TDU

Pension Victory!

TDU is on the move in New Jersey. A pension fund victory is presently in the works that will result in benefit increases of hundreds of dollars each month for Teamsters in several New Jersey locals. And in the process of winning this victory, New Jersey TDUers are showing that the fear and intimidation that has hung over many of these locals for years can be overcome.

Initial steps on the pension fund were instigated by Local 560 St. Johnsbury driver John McKenzie who, like many other New Jersey Teamsters, has worked in more than one local. Each local's pension fund has reciprocity with the others and is supposed to provide pro-rata [illegible] years worked in each local.

McKenzie was shocked to find out that the rules had been changed. When he looked into how much his total pension would be, he was told by Local 641, where he had earned four years of credit, that his monthly benefit had been cut from $45.00 to $15.50.

"I couldn't believe that my pension benefits would be cut to a third of what I had been told they were in 1976. I expected them to go up, not down, by 1985," McKenzie told *CD*.

But it was true, the pension fund had simply changed its rules as of December 1984, with the result that anyone retiring after that date under a pro-rata plan would only get the rate effective when they worked in the local, instead of the one in effect when they retired. Even worse, it turned out that a total of at least four New Jersey funds had changed their rules, meaning that the ripoff would affect thousands of Teamsters. McKenzie's benefit cut was bad enough, but hundreds and possibly thousands of others were hit harder. For example, one member was informed that his benefits would be cut from $1,300 per month to $700! If he retired before December 1984, his benefits would have been almost twice as much.

After discovering this incredible ripoff, McKenzie contacted TDU, and a meeting was quickly set up to see if other members were ready to help tackle the problem. They

continued on page 9

We Are Working For You

Recent TDU victories on benefit funds that affect thousands of Teamsters prove that TDU is getting the job done. Just recently we have:

✓ **Won Legal Action** that protects thousands of Teamsters when their employer is delinquent in paying health and welfare payments.

✓ **Helped Insure that Thousands** of Teamsters will receive their 30-and-out pension benefits by working for reciprocity between the Central States and Local 710 Pension Plans.

✓ **Improved the Pensions** that hundreds of New Jersey Teamsters will receive thanks to legal action and organizing by the New York/New Jersey TDU Office. *(For more on these victories see page 9.)*

If you need more reasons to join TDU, then stay tuned to future issues of *Convoy Dispatch*. But don't you think that these victories are reason enough to support the organization that is working for you? Join today.

JOIN TDU!

TDU Membership Application Form

Name_____ Local #_____

Address_____

City_____ State/Prov._____ Zip_____

Phone (___) _____ Company_____
Area Code

City☐ Road☐ Dock☐ Clerical☐ Warehouse☐
Construction☐ Production☐ Other_____

☐ $25 membership fee—for one year's membership & subscription to **CONVOY DISPATCH.**
☐ $60 three year membership fee. ($10 of this shall be rebated to the local chapter).
☐ $15 annual dues for spouses, retirees, and Teamsters who gross less than $12,000 a year.

Return to: TDU, P.O. Box 10128, Detroit, Michigan 48210
(TDU membership is kept confidential from employers and IBT officials.)

WORCESTER, MA 010
13 JUN 1985

From the Members

Teamsters for a Democratic Union, Box 10128, Detroit, MI 48210 313-842-2600

Members: Don't Ignore Problems; Sign the Petition

The right to vote campaign for our top Teamster officers is underway, with petitions circulating throughout the country to this effect. In most cases when I ask someone if they would like to sign the petition, they say something like, "I have always thought we should have had the right to vote," or, "This is way overdue."

Some months ago, when Presser was asked by the media how he could justify being a millionaire and continue to accept a salary of hundreds of thousands of dollars annually from the IBT, he replied, "Some make it in real estate, some make it in industry...I make it in unions. So what?"

It has been brought out many times that Presser inherited his place in the union from his father Bill Presser. Not so long ago, many of us saw him taking the fifth amendment on national television rather than answer questions that directly concern us and our union.

I respect his right to invoke the fifth amendment as a private citizen, but when he refuses to answer questions which concern me and my affairs, and my brothers and sisters in the field of labor, he is stepping out of line. That tells me something: that he is not the type of person I want to handle any part of my life.

But brothers and sisters, do you want my opinion as to who is to blame for this situation? We are, for letting him get away with it. We have ignored what has been happening for too long. So, please, let us take steps to change the situation. Sign and circulate the petition for the right to vote. Send a donation to TDU to help pay for the many costs of this campaign. Let us see that those who work for us will finally be accountable to us.

They will never reduce their inflated salaries or give us the right to vote voluntarily. It's up to us. I am circulating the petition and have sent in a donation. Won't you?

Earl Bowyer
Local 171
Vinton, Virginia

Let's Target Organizing

TDU needs to concentrate on the lack of organizing going on in the transportation sector by the International Union. It is the diminishing percentage of union drivers in the industry that is putting the pressure on those who remain in the union. The correct impression of nonunion drivers is that many of our locals, our International Union, and our pension and health and welfare funds are subsidiaries of organized crime.

Jeff Reeder
Local 722
Urbana, Illinois

Truck Safety Is Ignored by Union

Like many other Teamsters, I work for a company that says, "Drive them until they fall apart, then we fix them." Well, I don't agree with them, but does our union? In my opinion, yes. Because if they didn't, we wouldn't be forced to drive these rolling death traps.

Six months ago I was injured on a truck that two other men had previously been injured on in exactly the same way. I asked the company to fix it, and their response was, "We'll get to it later." I asked the union for help, and they said, "What can we do?"

We are supposed to be the number one union in the world—it's true—number one with the highest number of our members out on workers' compensation.

As far as I can tell, we don't have a leg to stand on as long as our union backs out on its obligations, and it seems that as far as the union is concerned they don't care if we have an arm or a leg or anything else.

With a little help from TDU, I know that I am getting my confidence together, and I am willing to pull my share and give it all I've got.

Janice Davis
Local 175
Charleston, West Virginia

TDU Truth Beats Silence & Rumors

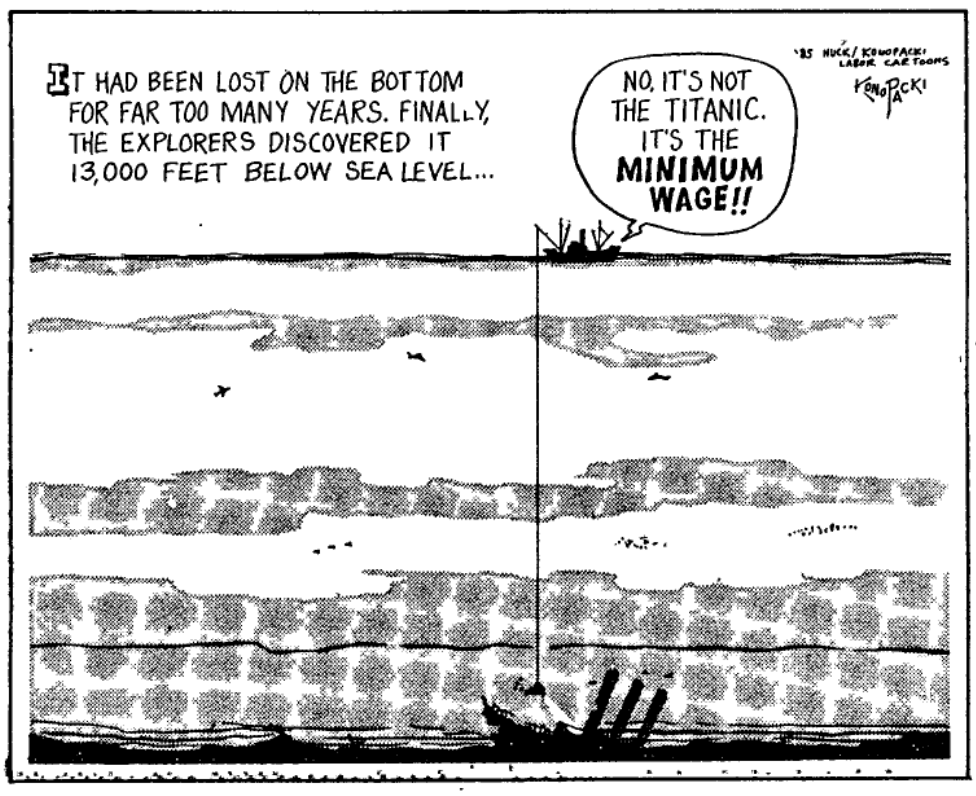
Thank you for the information printed on Ryder/PIE in the *Convoy Dispatch*. We get more information from TDU than we hear from either the company or the union. It's a pretty frightening feeling to watch 30 years of employment slowly going down the drain, and only receive misinformation, rumors and silence as a reward. Thanks for the truth TDU!

Mary Rugroden
Teamster wife
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Thanks from Louisville, KY

TDU is doing a fine job, and we in Louisville appreciate all that you are doing for all Teamsters and hope that we can contribute more in the coming year.

Alan W. Sharp
Local 89
Louisville, Kentucky


IT HAD BEEN LOST ON THE BOTTOM FOR FAR TOO MANY YEARS. FINALLY, THE EXPLORERS DISCOVERED IT 13,000 FEET BELOW SEA LEVEL...
NO, IT'S NOT THE TITANIC. IT'S THE MINIMUM WAGE!!
'85 HUCK/KONOPACKI LABOR CARTOONS
KONOPACKI

New York/New Jersey & W. Coast Offices

To contact the West Coast TDU office, write: TDU, Box 8548, San Jose CA 95155, and call (408) 971-1035. For the NY/NJ office, write: TDU, YMCA Building, Room 619, 30 Third Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11217, and call (718) 834-0631.

TDU Steering Committee

Co-Chairs:
Doug Allan, #208
Pete Camarata, #299
Linda Gregg, #435
Maralee Smith, #142

Organizer:
Ken Paff, #407

Trustees:
Barbara Boriotti, #804
Cliff Coonley, #600
Mike Friedman, #407

Members:
Emil Abate, #853
John Braxton, #623
Archie Cook, #705
Manuel Diaz, #679
Edward Hernandez, #707
Doug Mims, #728
Mike Savwoir, #41

Alternates:
Pete Sercombe, #150
Jerry Simon, #20
Jesse Mize, #688

MOVING? Please notify us of any change of address. Otherwise you will not receive your *Convoy Dispatch*, as it is sent third class mail and will not be forwarded to you. Use the membership application in any issue of the paper to let us know you are moving, and write on the top of the form: **CHANGE OF ADDRESS.**

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Who We Are

CONVOY DISPATCH is the voice of Teamsters for a Democratic Union. We are the united rank and file movement to reform the Teamsters, created out of the merger of PROD and TDU.

We are truck drivers, dock workers, production workers, warehouse workers — every kind of Teamster and spouses too.

We are a grassroots organization with chapters from coast to coast in the USA and Canada. We believe in returning this union to the membership and we are doing it. We are a democratic organization in which every member has a voice and vote. Our 15-member International Steering Committee was elected in October 1985 for one year. Our Rank & File Convention had nearly 500 representatives present.

We are proud Teamsters standing up for our rights. TDU invites all Teamsters interested in defending our contracts and reforming our union to join us. We do reserve the right to exclude those who are opposed to reform or to TDU and its principles.

Rank & File Bill of Rights

I. DEMOCRATIC BY-LAWS. All Business Agents and Stewards should be elected. Vacancies in offices should be filled by special election within three months. Local union committees should be elected. Contract and strike votes should be by majority (not two-thirds). All contracts should provide for elected officers retaining their company seniority.

II. DIRECT ELECTION OF OFFICERS. General President and all International officers should be elected by the membership. International VPs elected by regions. An end to trusteeships and split-off locals.

III. A FAIR GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE. Innocent till proven guilty, right to remain on the job till final procedure completed. Grievance procedure should include right to a speedy trial, arbitration by peers, and the right to strike if necessary.

IV. PRESERVATION OF WORKING CONDITIONS. The union's purpose is to expand and preserve what we have, not trade it away for anything less. People come first, not productivity.

V. SAFETY AND HEALTH. We have the right to enter the workplace without fear for our health and leave in the same condition we arrive. Teamsters should have the right backed up by our union to refuse unsafe work or hazardous conditions. We are not machinery.

VI. EIGHT HOUR DAY AND FIVE DAY WEEK. Forced overtime and unfair dispatch rules destroy our family life and cost us jobs. No mandatory overtime, "flexible" work weeks, or 70-hour slavery. We are for the advent of the four day work week. We work to live, not live to work!

VII. A DECENT PENSION. Every dollar in the pension funds belongs to us. We are entitled to 25 and out, cost of living on pensions, and union pension trustees elected by the rank and file and retirees to safeguard our money.

VIII. JUST SALARIES FOR OFFICERS. A union officer can't understand the problems of members who make less than half what he makes. No officer should make more than the highest paid working members in his jurisdiction. No multiple salaries from union, company, or government sources, or special fringes and pensions. Salary increases limited to the average increase for membership, and subject to membership approval.

IX. EQUALITY AMONG TEAMSTERS. Bring all wage levels up to the highest standards, not a lot for the few and little for the many. Fight the hardest for the lowest paid.

X. END TO DISCRIMINATION. Employers have used the difference in age, race, and sex to divide us for decades. We oppose these injustices and divisions. Support affirmative action to correct past injustices. Employers should bear the cost of their past discrimination, not the members.

Washington Watch

Photo by Bob Gumpert

Roger Thomas, Local 988.

Local 988 Reinstates TDUer

Roger Thomas, Teamster driver for Jack Cooper in Houston, Texas, won a full victory in January after the officials of Houston Local 988 tried in vain to kick him out of the union. Thomas credits TDU with winning the battle: "I could not have won without TDU's support and without the lawsuit that was filed on my behalf."

Thomas was expelled from Local 988 last April after the executive board held a kangaroo-style hearing against him. Thomas was accused of saying his steward took a payoff, after it became common knowledge at the terminal that the employer (Jack Cooper—United Transports) loaned the steward $2500.

It was then that he contacted TDU, through other drivers at the terminal who were members. TDU pointed out that: 1) it is illegal to punish a member for free speech activity, no matter how critical of the officers or their pals, and 2) it was commonly stated all over the terminal that the steward was the benefactor of a loan from the company, and 3) that the officials held a hearing without even properly notifying Thomas of the charges against him, and 4) that the employer was working with the union on the whole deal.

Suit was filed in federal court in July. The local officials then changed their behavior, providing Thomas with a ballot on the carhaul contract and allowing him to attend union meetings.

Now, Thomas has been vindicated. In January the Teamster General Executive Board ordered Local 988's decision completely reversed.

South Africa Divestment Backed

The TDU Steering Committee in December adopted a suggestion made at the Rank and File Convention in October and went on record in favor of encouraging the Teamster pension plans to consider divesting from corporations which maintain operations in South Africa. This is considered by unions in South Africa, Bishop Desmond Tutu and others to be the most effective way Americans can show solidarity.

Labor Dept's Enforcement of "Whistleblower" Law Found Weak

For years TDU lobbied hard for legal protection for truck drivers engaged in safety activities. In 1983 Congress responded by enacting the TDU-initiated Section 405 of the Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) which provides protection for all transportation industry employees. Below is a summary of the Act's provisions and an update on the Department of Labor's (DOL) enforcement performance.

The Act's Protection

Section 405 protects all employees in surface transportation from employment discrimination (including discharge) that is based on the employee's safety-related activities. Thus, the act promises protection to employees who follow federal or state safety regulations, who refuse unsafe work, or who complain to their employer or government agencies about unsafe working conditions.

As noted by a DOL official, while the act's strong language suggests great protection for workers, it has been very under-utilized. In 1984, only 354 employees filed complaints under the act, and, in 1985, this number dropped to 248. This under-utilization may be attributed to the fact that few workers are aware of Section 405, or may be a result of the DOL's mediocre enforcement record.

The Office of Occupational Health and Safety, within the DOL, is charged with enforcement of Section 405. In the three years that the act has been in effect, the DOL has had a very spotty enforcement record. A few conclusions can be drawn from an examination of the cases found meritorious. The DOL is slowly improving what began as a very poor enforcement record. Thus, in the first half of 1984, only eight cases were found to have merit. By the end of the year, twenty-five merit findings had been issued, and in 1985 fifty-eight merit findings were issued.

There is also a drastic difference in enforcement between DOL regional offices. In 1985, Region 7 (Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska) issued 37 merit findings, a rate of 75%. In contrast, no other region issued over 13 merit findings, and Regions 8, 9 and 10, which cover most of the western United States, found none of the 54 complaints lodged with them meritorious. This complete lack of enforcement in the west suggests that this region cannot be taking Section 405's purposes seriously.

The complaints that the DOL does find meritorious under Section 405 illustrate the clear need for the act's protections, indicating the length that employers will go to to force employees to break a law or to get rid of outspoken workers.

In 1984 CF discharged an employee who had told his dispatcher repeatedly that he was too sick to work and the dispatcher ordered him to come in anyway. He did, but signed his log forced to drive. A few miles down the road he called for an ambulance and the doctor medicated him and told him to take several days off work.

for Mullins Leasing had worked 22 hours when told to continue driving. He took a short break, 3½ hours, and continued on. He fell asleep at the wheel and had a minor accident. Upon arrival at the second terminal he was told to continue to another location. When he refused, he was fired..

The DOL's enforcement of Section 405, particularly in the west, is far from adequate. Publicity should be given to the act's protections by the Teamsters Union and by the DOL. Since enforcement of the act is so spotty, employees who have their complaints dismissed by the DOL should take advantage of the hearing process afforded to them under the act. For more information on Section 405, or for assistance in filing charges under it, contact TDU.

Legal Briefs

Senate Bill Sets Mandatory Drug Screening

A bill pending before the Senate, entitled the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1985, poses both a benefit and a danger to road drivers. If passed, the bill would create additional funding for state roadside inspection of trucks, but would also require mandatory drug testing as part of the roadside inspections. Under the act drivers would have their license revoked for 150 days if the test finds they are intoxicated, But, as pointed out in previous *CD* articles, drug tests are plagued by a host of problems that seriously question their reliability. Comments on the bill can be directed to Senators Danforth and Packwood at the Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510.

Last month in *Convoy Dispatch* we reported on a suit filed against Yellow Freight Systems and the union on the drug testing provisions of the NMFA. In late January, a suit was filed in the United States District Court Northern District of Ohio against Roadway Express and the International Union.

The pressure put on the companies and the union as a result of the pending litigation may already be bringing changes to the drug testing procedures. It's been reported that the Eastern Conference Joint Area Committee recently deadlocked a drug testing case, based on the fact that the companies were not confirming positive urinalysis reports with blood testing, as required by the agreement, a point TDU has included in the lawsuits.

Landrum-Griffin Victory for Boston TDUer and Attorney.

As a result of a suit filed by Boston attorney Mark Stern on behalf of TDUer Arthur Doty, a Massachusetts Federal Court has ruled that union members have three years to file suits that allege violations under the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA). Doty had been denied membership in two IBT locals—42 and 48. Other circuit court decisions have given union members only six months. This variance of opinion means that the Supreme Court may soon decide the issue.

Several Suits Filed Over Jifflox Injuries.

Ongoing work by the TDU Washington office has uncovered at least five lawsuits filed by drivers because of injuries caused by the Jifflox. The suits, filed in Indiana, Michigan, Tennessee and Pennsylvania, allege deficiencies in design and lack of an effective counter balance. Hundreds of petitions have been submitted to the Washington TDU Office regarding the Jifflox, with many members still working on getting signatures. The petitions will be used to back up the legal action, and also submitted to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Drivers who still have petitions should get them in to the Washington office as soon as possible, and drivers with information on Jifflox injuries or who would like to help should contact TDU immediately.

Washington Office

This page is devoted to news from the Washington office of TDU — formerly PROD's national office. Litigation, designing new legislation, and reforming safety regulations concerning all aspects of working conditions and truck design — the Professional Drivers Council of TDU is here to help you. Contact us today at:

PROD/TDU
2000 P Street, N.W., Room 612
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 785-3707

Threat to Allow Cut-Rate Casuals On Road

IBT Set to Sell Out NMFA Again?

Jackie Presser and the International Union are considering a major rewrite of the National Master Freight Agreement, in midterm and without a vote of the members. At issue is establishing an over-the-road scale of 27.5c per mile and allowing the big carriers to flood the highways with casuals.

The issue is currently deadlocked to the National Grievance Committee, chaired by Jackie Presser. It could go either way, with thousands of fulltime, top-rate jobs hanging in the balance.

Unfortunately, there are some indications that a sellout is a possibility, so the time is now to sound the alarm and have all concerned local unions voice their opinion.

Until now the trend toward more and more use of casuals to eliminate fulltime Teamster jobs has mainly affected city and dock workers. And in 1985, a new cut-rate of $11 an hour was inserted into the NMFA specifically only for "hourly-paid casual workers." Nothing was added to provide for road casuals or a road casual cut-rate.

But the employers, ever creative in their desire for more concessions and fewer union employees, invented one! Different rates were invented, but 27.5c now seems to be the standard deal.

The situation is worst in the south, where many road casuals are being used to cut jobs by CF, Roadway and other large carriers. This is because Don West, Southern Conference freight director and International VP appointed by Presser, has endorsed the big giveaway! West says he sees nothing wrong with it. Drivers from Orlando to Memphis to Houston most definitely do see something wrong with it.

In the Eastern Conference, a Titan message to all locals last year caused a scare when International VP Joe Trerotola said no road cut-rate had been established "yet." More recently, Eastern Conference reps like Chuck Gagnon have been singing the employers' song on the deal.

Meanwhile, Jack Yager, the national freight director of the entire union, claims that he intends to enforce the contract. In a letter dated August 6, 1985, Yager stated: "Please be advised there is no—repeat—no casual rate for road drivers in any Over-the-Road supplement to the National Master Freight Agreement."

We expect a decision soon. In fact, the printing of the contract books may be held up pending the outcome. We hope for the best, and are pushing for it. But if there is a sellout, it will be time to put the blame on those responsible and take them to task both legally and politically.

Freight Lines

Full Backpay and Reinstatement for New York TDUer

Long-time TDU member Bob Castaldo recently won his job back with full backpay at the Maybrook, New York panel hearing. Castaldo had been fired by his employer, Van's Auto and Air Express, for allegedly assaulting a foreman. Castaldo appeared at the panel hearing with his own attorney and proved that the foreman had in fact attacked him without provocation. Castaldo is now back at work and continues to insist on enforcement of the contract.

Bankers Say Companies With ESOPs are Bad Risks.

In a recent interview in *Transport Topics*, Laurence Pierce, VP from the First National Bank of Boston commented on loan arrangements with trucking companies engaged in ESOPS: "We might not make loans to some of the new employee stock ownership plans that are being announced across the industry, and in general appear to be adopted by carriers that are otherwise in financial distress.....Even though a wage give back is part of the program to try to make the carrier healthy, there is nothing inherent in the extent of the wage giveback that would make us feel the ESOP would be a success. Certainly in the terms of momentum of the carriers involved in ESOPs as rescue efforts, we see nothing to suggest that the ESOP will turn the carriers around."

Fired Roadway Worker Finally Receives Some Justice.

The state of New York Workers Compensation Board recently awarded a fired Roadway employee workers compensation benefits for extreme stress and anxiety disorder caused by his employer.

The case revolves around Ed Brown, a TDU activist who was fired by Roadway. The judge ruled that because of Brown's activity in TDU, his employer subjected him to severe stress and anxiety, enabling him to collect workers compensation.

The judge also noted that Local 707 and the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) didn't offer Brown a fair shake: "The union has a duty to its members to give them fair representation subject to good faith and without discrimination. This was absent in the case. In the NLRB proceedings the claimant was not afforded to present witnesses or cross examine the employer and its witnesses."

Boston CEX Subcontracting; Local Blames Eastern Conference.

Conway Eastern Express (formerly Penn Yan, and the only unionized division of Conway) is violating the contract in a big way by subcontracting work previously done by union drivers to a non-union cartage company in Rhode Island. Four jobs are immediately affected, with a possible seven more on the line. When asked what was going on, Boston Local 25 sidestepped the issue by pointing the finger of blame at the Eastern Conference, which they said had let CEX make the change. But this direct violation of Article 32 of the NMFA isn't going unchallenged by some of the drivers who have started to demand some action on this situation.

Local 773, Allentown, Pennsylvania

Strike Shows Threat Labor Leasing Poses

Dominic Buscemi
Preston
Local 773, Allentown, Pennsylvania

In 1968, Walt Wercheiser was a Marine struggling for survival in the jungles of Vietnam. Today Walt is a member of Teamster Local 773, struggling along with 29 of his co-workers to keep his job and working conditions. The enemies in this battle are labor leasing and union indifference.

Labor leasing is when one company leases its workers from another company. In this case, Cotter Co. (True Value Hardware Stores) leases its drivers from Mack Transportation. These Teamster drivers had a contract with Mack, not with Cotter.

After three years of concessions and record setting profits, Cotter still wasn't satisfied and asked for more concessions. The drivers refused. Cotter then broke its leasing arrangement with Mack Transportation and started using the labor services of another labor leasing company called Myer's. The Myer's drivers are also members of Allentown Local 773. Their contract has considerably lower standards than the Mack Transportation contract ($9 an hour as opposed to $11.25 at Mack). Myer's has offered the laid off Mack drivers jobs, but with significant concessions. Their representative, Steve Banus, Secretary Treasurer of Local 773, who had initially taken a strong stand against any concessions, has now done a total about-face and is trying to talk the drivers into going to work for Myer's.

He had assured the Mack drivers that Myer's drivers would not cross the picket lines "without my blessing" and insisted that Myer's would have to pay freight wages to get a contract with the local. He also gave additional assurances that no unionized carrier would cross the line.

Despite this not a single driver has honored the picket line. One driver who did refuse to cross was told by the company that he would be fired if he didn't. He later called the union hall and was told to cross.

The picketing drivers were confident that Myer's could not hire enough drivers to handle the workload. This confidence was shaken by reports from several of the newly-hired scab drivers that Myer's BA Chuck Bernhart told them to use his name as a reference on the application. When asked about this at the monthly meeting, Bernhart admitted that he had been sending drivers to Myer's. Some of the Myer's men said that they wouldn't cross the line if the union would back them.

The position of Local 773 officials is that crossing the picket lines is a way to preserve union jobs in the local, as failure to cross would only mean that work would go to non-union scabs who would cross the picket lines anyway. The hall justifies this reasoning by saying that this is only a secondary picket because they can't get the International to sanction the strike.

Even though labor leasing has become a major weapon in management's union-busting arsenal, the International refuses to support the strike. Submissive resignation to this kind of tactic only encourages it all the more.

K.C. Driver Wins Job

Charles Welsh
Consolidated Freightways
Local 41, Kansas City, Missouri

In October, Kansas City-based CF driver Dennis Jackson was fired at Liberal, Kansas because he couldn't get his truck started. The Kansas City steward was there asleep, and when called got up and went right to work on the case. A call to Kansas City dispatch confirmed that they would uphold the firing.

Three of us: myself, Jim Crammer and Jack Williams talked to the terminal manager when we got back to Kansas City, but he stood by the firing. Since he wouldn't change his mind we all got behind our steward, Bill Smith, and the BA, Dennis Speaks. Bill Smith took off without pay and went to St. Louis with Speaks to present the grievance.

It paid off. Jackson was off for 13 days, but got his job back with full back pay—$2,112. It may seem like a small victory, but it shows what you can do if you stick together as a group and work with your steward and BA. We are proud of them and ourselves.

Photo by Bob Gumpert

I'll Be in Vegas

Bob Steffensen
Central Cartage
Local 580, Lansing, Michigan

I hope as many members as possible will plan to be at the IBT Convention in Las Vegas in May. This is the highest body in the Teamsters Union, and it's time more rank and file members started to participate, learn what's happening there, and help make positive changes such as winning the right to vote. It's time to make sure that what goes on at the convention reaches the light of day—that's why it is so important for members to attend.

Western Conference Matlack

Tank Drivers Vote No on Concession Pact

On February 10, Matlack drivers in the western states voted down their company's "first and final" offer by a 5-1 margin. These tank drivers had been waiting since the contract expired last June with no word from their employer, and suddenly in early January Matlack presented its "first and final" offer.

The proposal added insult to injury coming as it did after the tanker contract of three years ago, which contained a $1.18/hour wage cut and a permanent two-tier for all new hires. That contract was only approved after the head of the union tanker committee, Gene Shephard (now a management consultant), forced three separate votes on the same proposal. The final vote came only days before Christmas 1982, and passed with a minority voting for it using the two-thirds rule.

This time Matlack offered to raise wages to $11.99/hour by June 1987. This would still leave drivers below the $12.27/hour that they were making before December 1982. The lower tier of workers who have been hired in the last three years will get corresponding raises but still stay permanently below the rates paid to more senior workers.

Worse yet are the other provisions in the Matlack proposal. All work within a 35-mile radius of the terminal (in some areas, such as Long Beach, the figure is 75 miles) will be paid by an "hourly peformance function" which every haul has a fixed amount of time set for it, with that much paid for it regardless of how long the haul takes. In an area such as Los Angeles, where traffic conditions vary widely at different times of day and at different days of the week, this is ridiculous.

Other problems with the proposal included Matlack's insistence on locals waiving their jurisdiction over drivers from other locals coming into their area; the substitution of the bogus Southern States Health and Welfare plan for the existing Western States plan, and Matlack's proposals for a $250 bonus in place of all the retroactive pay which has built up since the contract expired last June.

The first vote on this contract was encouraging, but the battle is far from over. The two major western tanker locals, 315 in Richmond and 692 in Long Beach, have come out strongly against the contract, and the no vote was a solid one. Matlack is responding by claiming that they may put even less money in their next offer, because of "increased competition" from other haulers.

Tanker drivers up and down the west coast, at Matlack and other haulers such as Chemical Leaman, are realizing that if they are to end up with decent contracts, or any contracts at all, they need to get organized now. If you would like to help, you can write or call the Western States TDU office.

Vote Boots Dictatorship in Chicago

Members of the Chicago (Independent) Truck Drivers Union have voted to abolish the dictatorial position of Executive Director in a court-sanctioned referendum vote.

Four dissenting members of the Board of Governors of the local will now constitute a majority and control the board. They have promised open union meetings and some consideration of reopening the hiring hall.

Members of the Rank and File Reform Committee (including TDU members and others) are very happy with the outcome of the vote, in which 4,000 members participated. The Reform Committee has been working toward opening up the union. They have also filed suit with help from TDU to win the right to have union meetings (the local has not held them in years).

Also, now the union has acknowledged in court it is a local union, not a national one. This means elections have to be every three years instead of five. The Chicago Independent is not a part of the Teamsters Union, though it has often integrated its bargaining with Chicago Teamster locals.

South Bend Local 364

Official Wins as TDU Recruiter of the Month

In some locals it seems like the local officers will do anything to keep the rank and file away from the union hall, at least that is the case in South Bend, Indiana Local 364.

For years Local 364 meetings have been held on Monday nights — a time almost certain to guarantee the lack of a quorum. Due to overtime, shift work and dead tired road men it was difficult for members to make the meetings. Consequently, little union business ever saw the light of day, and Local 364 officers went about their business without the "aggravation" of explaining their actions.

TDU Organized Turnout

That is until a year ago when the local TDU Chapter was formed and all of a sudden there was a quorum forcing the officers to field tough questions from the floor. At the January membership meeting TDU organized a strong turnout and passed a motion that the membership meetings be moved to Sunday afternoon, making them easier for members to attend. The motion also directed that notices be posted reminding members of the meetings.

Local 364 President Bob Warnock was more than a little uncomfortable with the new arrangement [illegible] ruary, with his access to the entire membership and a core of backers, he mustered the best showing he could in an effort to change the meetings back to Monday nights. A motion to that effect was made and 102 people (some reportedly not carrying union cards) voted to return the meetings to Monday. Warnock refused to take a no vote, denying some 80 members the right to vote.

Immediately after the local meeting 70 angry people showed up at the TDU meeting. All of them pledged to become more active in stopping Bob "Marcos" Warnock's undemocratic practices and many of them joined TDU.

At the TDU meeting Frank Alberty, Murphy road steward and one of the founders of the TDU Chapter said, "I'd like to ask Brother Warnock just why he's so afraid of the rank and file coming to meetings. Maybe he's afraid that the members wil' question his $90,000 salary. Also, I wonder why those members who voted to move the meeting back are afraid. What do they owe Warnock? We've never seen their faces at union meetings in the past, and we won't see them on Mondays in the future."

Fine Recruiting Job

"We'd like to extend our thanks to Brother Warnock and the executive board for doing such a fine recruiting job for TDU," said Roadway steward and Chapter chairman Fred Hartstein. "This was the finest display that Brother Warnock could put on, especially before people who never had an opportunity to attend a general membership meeting."

TDU members, new and old, went [illegible] election of their local's delegates to the IBT Convention and decided to offer the members of Local 364 a choice for a candidate who wouldn't ape Jackie Presser but who would genuinely speak for the rank and file. They're enthusiastically beginning the campaign for their right to vote candidate, and are anxiously awaiting their right to vote in the general local elections in December.

Teamster Rank & File Legal Rights Handbook

with information on the latest cases affecting you as a rank-and-file Teamster

"This is a terrific tool for the rank and file movement. It's the first place that a union activist should look for the answers to questions about labor law."

—Michael Goldberg
Professor of Law
Rutgers University

Answers your questions on:

- Uses of the NLRB
- The Grievance Procedure, the Labor Board and the Courts
- Safety and Health
- Pensions
- Discrimination
- Laws Affecting Employment
- Also Includes New Glossary of Legal Terms

Yes, I would like to order _____ copies of the Legal Rights Handbook. Price: $7 each ($5 ea. for 5 or more).

Name_____ Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Local No._____ Phone ( )_____

Send to: **TDU, P.O. Box 10128, Detroit, MI 48210 • (313) 842-2600**

RIGHT TO VOTE
Bulletin Board

Have you signed the Right to Vote Petition? If you have, you can count yourself among the tens of thousands who have done their bit to bring democracy back to the union. If you haven't, why not?

Signing the petition isn't enough. We need every Teamster who would like to vote on our International officials to circulate the petition. We need to reach every local, every jurisdiction, and spread the message that thousands do care about the future of our union, and are willing to sign on. There's a little more than two months left before the petitions are due, and there are thousands waiting to sign who haven't had the opportunity. Please, take the time to fill in the coupon at the bottom of the page, and let's all pitch in to help win our democratic rights.

President's Commission Backs TDU Stand

On January 14, the President's Commission on Organized Crime released its comprehensive report entitled "The Edge: Organized Crime, Business, and Labor Unions," and in it endorsed a major plank in TDU's platform—the direct election of delegates to the IBT Convention.

Recommendation number six (of eight) states that, "Internal Department of Labor documents show that *the IBT's method of electing* Convention delegates fails to meet the LMRDA standards...the Commission recommends that union members have the right to vote for delegates to their union's Convention."

TDU pointed out to the Commission that the IBT Convention provides an illegal method of choosing top officers, since over 88% of the delegates are not directly elected as delegates.

The policy recommendations of the Commission were issued in January, but the full report is being held back due to ongoing trials until March when it will be made public.

Some Officers Just Don't Get It

When members in Cincinnati put the question to their local president, T.P. Dunnmon, on whether he would support the right to vote at the IBT Convention, he played the game that a lot of officials know best. It's called pass the buck. He said, "I can't vote the way the members want me to, because the International says I can't."

In South Bend Local 364, when presented with the motion that the local go on record to support the right to vote, President Bob Warnock stated he would have to check the bylaws to see if he could allow such a motion. Well, we checked Bob. You can allow the motion. It apparently doesn't matter much, as Warnock then stated he was absolutely against the membership voting for International officers. With the way things are going in South Bend, he would probably rather the membership didn't vote on local officers either.

Just to set the record straight, we're including the language from the IBT Constitution on this matter just in case some local officers need to know. It says: "Delegates to the Convention meet to legislate on matters affecting the entire International Union and they are not bound, either legally or morally, to follow instructions of their particular local unions relative to their voting. Therefore, instructions and directions by local unions to their delegates-relating to voting on matters which come before the Convention shall be advisory only."

So, motions are in order, on an advisory basis. Just let your officials know that you'll be watching them to see how they voted.

Right to Vote Caravan Being Planned

We're taking the Right to Vote Petition on the road to reach new Teamsters. The caravan, planned for early April, will be making several stops from Detroit, through Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey. We're planning on getting maximum press coverage and showing the general public that Teamsters want the right to vote. Watch for details in the next *Convoy Dispatch.*

Steelworkers and the Right to Vote

Members of the United Steelworkers in the U.S. and Canada have the right to vote for their International officers. But, until recently they did not have the right in the steel industry for a majority membership vote on their contracts. Now they have won that right. Bill Andrews, president of the big Gary Local 1010, sums it up: "Never Give Up is the most important lesson I have learned from this experience...in 1976 few in our union's leadership were even willing to listen to our (reformers) arguments...but we kept trying." There's a lesson here for Teamsters!

Send Me Petitions

Use this form to get Right to Vote petitions, a brochure explaining the Right to Vote Campaign, and to receive special newsletters providing updates on our progress.

Yes, I'd like ____ copies of the petition and brochure. Please send them to:

Name_____ Phone #( )_____

Address _____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Send to: TDU, P.O. Box 10128, Detroit, MI 48210

1986: Can W

What's at stake at the upcoming Teamster Convention? What eff have on Teamsters across the nation? In the last issue of **Convoy Dispa** the last convention in 1981, particularly how the top IBT officials opp rank and file delegates — motions for positive steps forward like the officers and a plan to organize the unorganized in Teamster industr

In May rank and file delegates will be back on the convention flo other positive motions once again, urging that our union take action on the critical issues we face. This will be a great opportunity to make some positive changes in our union, but we also stand to lose a great deal. Every Teamster should be aware of this danger, because now is the time to defuse it.•

To understand the danger, take a look at what the majority of officers (maybe yours?) voted in favor of at the last IBT Conventi

✔ **Right to a Special Convention to Choose the IBT President.** I Presser as the head of our union. This would have been impossible b the IBT Constitution was changed to do away with the protection of s president if there is a mid-term vacancy.

✔ **Right to Democratically Vote in Your Local Union to Change Y** your business agents are chosen. Locals with appointed business ag switching over to elected business agents. This right was also given aw Convention.

✔ **Per Capita Dues to International Union Were Raised,** as well as th Yet when it came to a motion to increase strike benefits to $70 (and $9 that the delegates would get "fat on the picket line." Another step ba the 1981 Convention.

✔ **Resolution was Adopted** to lobby Congress, using your dues requiring that local union elections take place every three years. By voti tion at the 1981 convention most officers indicated that they would membership for election, as little as possible (once every five years).

These rights were lost at the 1981 convention. At past conventions o been voted away. If this trend continues, you can see that at the 1986 c even more of our rights as union members, and taking more steps b

The countdown has started. The time is now to send a message f members demand to keep the rights we now have and expect to see them e

TDU will be doing everything possible over the coming months to rights, and to win new rights — through legal action, organizing, and t for the Right to Vote. We need your help to do it. Remember, the rights be the ones you need.

VOTE FOR RANK AND FILE DELE

While most delegates at the IBT Convention will be automatically selected to go a members get to elect additional delegates.

If you are in one of these locals, we urge you to participate in the current election voting. Most locals with over about 5500 members are required to have an election fo each 750 additional members). Also those officers who have been appointed to fill v are not eligible to be automatic delegates, so more may be elected in some locals (this is the case in South Bend Local 364, New Orleans Local 270, Atlanta Local 728, and others). Locals in trusteeship cannot send delegates unless they hold a special delegate election, as is happening in Hollywood Local 399.

PLAN TO BE IN VEGAS

The IBT Convention will begin May 19, in Las Vegas. To back up the reform-minded delegates there and to let the International know that we want change, we need to have as many Teamsters as possible present. TDU is planning rallies and other events for the week; TDU headquarters will be at the El Rancho Hotel (formerly the Silverbird), a several minute drive from the convention center.

You can book your room arrangements through us at prices of $35 for a single (or double) room. On Sunday night May 18 we will be meeting together for a banquet. Prices are $13 per person. To make arrangements, use the coupon at right.

Guest passes to the IBT Convention are available through your local union that enable you to listen to the convention proceedings. If you need assistance getting a guest pass from your local, please contact TDU.

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"Convention Is a Chance to Set New Course"

This month CD interviewed Local 486 Recording-Secretary Dan Campbell to get his impressions of the upcoming IBT Convention, and what it will mean for Teamster officials and members. What follows are his comments.

I'll be attending the IBT Convention as a delegate from my local, and I've been thinking, well, what exactly will be accomplished there, and wondering a great deal what other delegates will do when there. I think there are many concerned local officers who would like to see some steps forward. I think, too, that there are many who would like to see new leadership from the International.

One thing I've realized is that it is very important for this convention to be a time when we start coming to grips with some serious problems. For example, every day a local union officer can see that the membership is not in the close relationship with the union that it should be and that we would want. Many members have simply drifted away, while others, especially the younger ones, think the benefits of unionism just came out of thin air—without any sacrifice or work.

Just based on this fact, I think a very real question facing all delegates at the convention is, "What can we do to rebuild union spirit in our membership?" I don't think it's enough for a local officer to complain about low attendance at union meetings, myself included, and I don't think it's right to not take action when we can see so many competent, union-minded members turning away from the union.

At the convention, I believe we can take steps to open up our union to more participation by the members. This will mean tough decisions, such as giving the rank and file the right to vote for International officers. I don't think it is farfetched at all that this single act would strengthen our bargaining position and organizing drives.

Beginning to open up our union like this would also mean being ready to put up with and even encourage dissent. One thing is for certain—it is not healthy for an organization to react to differing ideas with attacks or name-calling. If it does this I don't think it can draw in fresh, bright leaders or inspire confidence. More important, I don't think we can expect members to trust the leadership unless we trust the members to make sensible decisions by majority votes on contracts and officers.

You know, there is often a tendency to not face serious problems. It's natural, I guess, but pretending that all is well when it isn't just opens you up for bigger problems down the road.

Photo by Bob Gumpert

Dan Campbell is Recording Secretary of Michigan Local 486 and a reverend in his community church.

Let's face it—major Teamster employers have long-range plans to break down our master contracts, drive down conditions and pit locals against locals and members against members to get their way.

We've got to adopt strategies to combat these efforts and do our best to combine democracy and coordination so that our union faces these challenges together, with our fullest strength and with our greatest asset—the membership working with us.

Again, an example of what could be done is that we hash out as detailed as possible an organizing program that faces up to the tremendous nonunion threat that exists, particularly in the freight industry. Hand-in-hand, something has to be done to halt the spread of two-tier. I've seen what it can do in the UPS contract, and don't believe it is any kind of an answer to our problems. This issue, I believe, is one that desperately needs to be discussed at the convention and, hopefully, acted on.

There will be disagreements as we go down the road, but if we face the challenge as union brothers and sisters, with fraternal dialogue even when we differ, it would do nothing but strengthen us. In this way, I think the 1986 convention could be historic.

Being a local officer these days is certainly no picnic, but if we miss the opportunity this convention gives us to set new courses on some of our problems it would be unfortunate. I look forward to being at the convention, but my greatest hope is that it be one where the delegates are willing to think independently, look forward to the future, and vote their conscience.

I'll Be in Las Vegas for the IBT Convention

☐ Yes, I am planning on being in Las Vegas for the IBT Convention. Contact me with more information.

☐ Yes, I'd like to reserve a room(s) at this time. Please reserve a:

☐ Single Room
☐ Double Room/Sharing with _____

For the following nights:
☐ Sun. ☐ Mon. ☐ Tues. ☐ Wed. ☐ Thurs.

ROOM COST: # of nights _____ x $35 = _____

☐ Yes, I plan to attend the Sunday buffet dinner. ($13 per person).

MEAL COST: # of dinners _____ x $13 = _____

TOTAL COST: $_____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____ Zip _____

Phone#(____) _____ Local _____
Area Code

Send to: TDU, Box 10128, Detroit, MI 48210

Richard Shaw Workers Settle, Solidarity Week Called

Watsonville Strike Continues

Some 1,000 California Teamsters are still fighting their six month long strike against Watsonville Canning Co., but members at the Richard Shaw Company have voted to accept a compromise offer.

The Shaw settlement was successful in beating back the union-busting attempt, and all the scabs have been removed from the plant. But major concessions are included, the worst of which is the lowering of the lowest (and biggest) bracket's wage rate from $7.06 to $5.85 per hour and freezing it there for three years.

Higher brackets also take the $1.21 wage cut, and instead of wage increases a profit sharing plan is part of the deal. There are also some concessions on holidays, vacations and sick days.

On the positive side all strikers return to work with full amnesty from legal retribution and the scabs are to be laid off. Employer demands to break plant-wide seniority and for a two-tier clause were defeated.

The International Union and the Western Conference of Teamsters pressured Local 912 to settle the strike this month. The officers presented the offer in a hurried fashion on February 13. In fact, there were no questions or discussion from the floor of the meeting. Details were kept secret, and even Local 912 BA Joe Fahey didn't know what was in the settlement until it was presented, preventing him from presenting an opposing viewpoint.

The vote, after six months on the picket lines, was 275 to 136 in favor of accepting the pact and returning to work.

Strike Continues—Solidarity Week

The strike continues against Watsonville Canning, the more rabid union-buster. These strikers are the last line of defense against concessions which could spread through the industry. Pacts are coming up at Smuckers and Crosetti in Local 912.

The settlement at Shaw establishes a weak standard for the union, but Shaw is hoping for even more. The pact has a "favored nations clause" which says that if Local 912 settles for less at any other plant, Shaw gets to lower wages immediately to match.

The Watsonville Canning strikers face a crucial period as the peak packing season approaches. A week of strike activities—Solidarity Week—begins on February 17, with a strikers' rally focusing on stopping production and stopping the scabs.

A demonstration last summer against Shaw's union-busting.

Tempers are running high among the strikers. Strike leaders are working to assure that strikers do not direct their anger at the wrong target. Their struggle, more than ever, calls for a united effort including the Shaw workers. With the successful mobilizing of the Watsonville Canning strikers, the union, and thousands of strike supporters, the effect of the Shaw contract can be isolated and the strikers can still win a decent contract and save their union.

TDU Meets

Charlotte, North Carolina
Saturday, March 15
Time and place to be announced.
Call 202-785-3707 for more information.

New York City
Saturday, March 1
11 am
Empire State Labor College
330 W. 42nd, 2nd floor
New York City

Sacramento, California
Saturday, March 8
10 am
6822 8th Ave, Sacramento

Shreveport, Louisiana
Sunday, March 2
1 pm
Quality Inn, Airport
Junction of I-20 and Monkhouse Drive.

South Bend, Indiana
Sunday, March 16
1 pm
Carriage House Apartments
Community Building.
Mishawaka, Indiana

Southern California
Call 818-966-7154 for more information on meetings of the Southern California TDU Chapter.

Washington, DC
Saturday, March 1
2 pm
5600 Auth Road
Camp Springs, Maryland

Waterbury, Connecticut
Sunday, March 9
11 am
Call 313-842-2600 for more information.

Western Massachusetts
Saturday, March 8
3 pm
Howard Johnsons
Riverdale Road (Route 5)
West Springfield, Mass.

Is your chapter having a meeting? If so, let us know ahead of time so that it will be in **Convoy Dispatch.**

Want a meeting in your area? Let the office know and we'll help set one up.

Talkin' Union

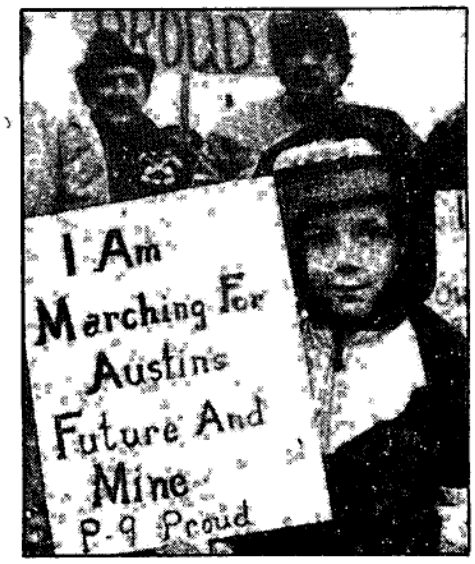
This month CD introduces a new column by Teamster road driver and long time unionist Earl Silver. If we can catch him between dispatches, we hope to make his column a monthly feature.

Have you noticed how some union members are tending to get a little feisty these days? Let's face it, unions have been taking it on the chin for the last six or seven years with wage cuts, wage freezes, work rules changes, and giving up just about everything but the kitchen sink. It's a funny thing, just when you think we're down and out something comes along to show you that there's still a lot of fight left in union members.

Take these workers at Hormel for instance. If you've been watching the TV reports you know that it's a pretty tough situation. I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw the National Guard escorting scabs in and out of the plant. After all, this isn't the Phillipines or South Africa, it's the midwest! Well, it just so happens that the Guard was called in by the governor who ran on something called the Democratic Farmer Labor Party ticket. That's what they call the Democratic Party in Minnesota, but this governor's got to have a lot of good union people scratching their heads over this use of military force.

There's been absolutely no violence. In fact, the strike's been unusually orderly. The sheriff of Austin said that he'd never heard of a strike that's gone for five months without one bit of property damage, not one person injured, and not one arrest on the picket line. I just can't quite figure out what in the world the National Guard was doing there.

There's no doubt about it, though, this strike is a bitter one. Hormel made some record profits last year. They've been cutting wages at their other plants. The brothers and sisters at



Support rally in Austin, Minnesota for striking P-9 workers, now in the sixth month of their strike against concessions.

Local P-9 just thought it was time to stop giving concessions to a company that doesn't need them. The International doesn't agree with the Local P-9 strikers. They say if P-9 stops the concessions that Hormel will pack up and move.

Of course, the International would end up with a little egg on their face, too, if P-9 can stop the concessions and get a better deal. But the P-9 folks say that the profitable companies should pay what's right and that the International Union could then bring the lowest paid up to the highest. Not the other way around. It makes good sense to me.

It's amazing and encouraging to see that these strikers are hanging tough even with the company, the international union, and the National Guard playing hardball. Even more amazing is that hundreds of their brothers and sisters at the other Hormel plants, members who have already taken wage cuts, are backing them up. They've risked their own livelihoods and were fired from their jobs for honoring roving pickets set up by P-9. That's real solidarity! I figure that if these people can risk everything because they believe in what P-9 is doing, then I can give up Spam sandwiches and honor the Hormel boycott called by P-9 in a show of support. It's not much, but it's a little something that'll make me feel better.

I've also had to sit up and take notice about the Teamster cannery workers out in Watsonville, California who are also hanging tough. Now, I don't claim to know about their industry, or their problems. What I do know is that it's got to be awful tough to make it on a paycheck of $6.50 an hour. Seems those corporations want even a bigger bite of those Teamster paychecks. It's been a long winter for these brothers and sisters who've been out on strike for the last six months. They've put their jobs, their homes, and everything they've got on the line. That takes a lot of guts, and I'm proud to call them my union brothers and sisters.

You know, things aren't so bright and beautiful for this old trucker. But, the next time I cash a paycheck, I'm going to think about those brave brothers and sisters all over the country who're risking everything for a better contract and a better life. And I'm going to thank God that the spirit of unionism is alive and kicking in these hard times.

Legal Action Stops Nightmare of Sudden Benefit Cutoffs

TDU Wins Health and Welfare Victory

You've heard this story. A Teamster or one of their family members needs medical care. It comes time for the paperwork only to discover—too late—that the employer was delinquent on the health and welfare payments. The Teamster gets stuck with the bill. It used to be, "Tough luck, buddy," and the union trustees on the fund just went along with the scam.

Teamsters in the Central States won't have to go through this nightmare any more thanks to legal action taken by TDU which reached a successful conclusion in January. As attorney Tom Geoghegan explained, "It's a case where a group of Teamsters stepped in, filed suit, and won protections for thousands of other Teamsters. They also set a standard that other health and welfare funds, not just the Central States, may copy.

Features of the Settlement

The settlement of the case, filed by four TDU members, includes as its most important features:

- The Central States Fund cannot cut off benefits due to employer delinquency without a 30 day advance written warning sent to each affected Teamster. They must also send out a final warning. (Prior to this lawsuit, they were cutting off Teamsters with no warning at all—only a letter sent to the local union.)
- The Central States Fund will allow any Teamster who is about to be cut off the option of self payment, at either the regular rate or under the reduced rate plan of $30.50 per week. (Prior to this settlement, Teamsters were not allowed to self pay if their employer was delinquent. Now they can do so for up to 104 weeks.) If and when the fund later collects from the delinquent employer, the member will be reimbursed in full for the self payments. A member has 90 days from the date of the first warning letter to start self payments.
- The Central States Fund will not cut off Teamsters unless their employer is at least 45 days delinquent. (Prior to this suit they were cutting off people more readily.)

In 1981-82, prior to the filing of the suit, the Central States Fund was cutting off up to 20,000 Teamsters due to employer delinquency. If you've ever had to go through this problem, you know what a difference this victory will make. It will also give relief to thousands of Teamsters and their families, especially in these hard economic times.

The problem could have been solved very simply if Marion Winstead of Louisville, Loran Robbins of Indiana, Earl Jennings of Texas and Robert Sansone of St. Louis, the union trustees of the fund, would have taken the best interests of the members at heart, instead of stonewalling for as long and as hard as the employers.

"They should never have had this mean policy in the first place," said Indianapolis Roadway Steward Roger Beach, one of the four plaintiffs in the case. "I'm glad we were able to get this corrected."

It goes to show you that once again TDU took action, good strong positive action, and got results.

Baltimore Local 557

Organizing for Better Benefits

Sometimes an issue arises in a local union that sparks interest and excitement that cuts across jurisdictional and other barriers, uniting even those with long standing political differences. Such is the case in Baltimore Local 557 where inadequate pension benefits have come under invetsigation by a broad group of concerned members.

There hasn't been an increase in benefits from the Local 557 Pension Fund since before 1979, even though contribution rates have continued to rise. The fund now provides benefits of $334 per month at 20 years service and a maximum of $574 per month at 30 years service. Local 557 members rightly feel that these benefits are far below those enjoyed by most other freight and carhaul Teamsters.

Tackling the problem and figuring out what to do was too big a job for individual members, but the Rank and File Committee and Baltimore TDU decided to see what could be done. Their first task was to find out how strongly members felt about the problem and see how many would help do something about it. To do this they distributed a flyer outlining the problems and asking concerned members to get involved in an Ad Hoc Committee to Improve Benefits.

Response was astounding. "We literally received hundreds and hundreds of responses from that flyer," Consolidated Freightways driver and local activist Herman Myers told *CD*. "It was the most popular thing I've ever seen undertaken in my 36 years in the union."

Armed with this response and technical advice from the TDU Washington Office and the Pension Rights Center the committee moved into action. "Basically, we wanted some straight answers from the trustees of the fund," Cliff McDonald, Assistant Steward at Carolina said. "We've been paying a lot into the fund and gotten very little out. We wanted to know why. With TDU's help we got a lot of information and had it checked out by an actuary, but we still weren't getting any answers."

Over 150 members turned out for the committee's first meeting in January, despite very poor weather conditions and false announcements that the meeting had been cancelled. At the meeting it was decided to take the issue to the hall in the form of a petition asking for answers and an investigation into how benefits could be improved.

At the next Local 557 membership meeting a motion was raised to this effect. Local 557 President Herb Short and one of the union trustees quickly called the motion out of order. To add insult to injury, the local executive board announced that they had voted the full time employees of the local a $380 per week increase in sick benefits, bringing them up to $500 per week.

Since that meeting hundreds of requests have been made for the petitions, and members are more eager than ever to tackle the issue head on. Myers pointed out, "If not anything else, we're tenacious. With the vast majority of our local's membership behind us, we'll keep pushing until we increase benefits or find out why the trustees won't raise them."

Concerned about the state of your pension fund benefits, and want to do something about it? Contact the TDU office for suggestions and assistance on organizing for better benefits.

Photo by Bob Gumpert

I'll Be in Vegas

Cliff McDonald
Carolina Freight Carriers
Local 557, Baltimore, Maryland

There are just two things on my mind when I think of the Teamster Convention this May: One is the Relief Rider to the freight contract, and the other is the recently negotiated freight contract with its two-tier and other giveaways. These two events alone have convinced me that I should be in Las Vegas to show my support for the right to vote for our officers.

Victory on 30-and-Out Reciprocity

Thanks to pressure from many rank and file Teamsters and legal steps taken by TDU-preparatory to litigation, the Chicago-based Local 710 Pension Fund and the Central States Pension Plan have both agreed to grant reciprocal benefits on the 30-and-out pension. This means a Teamster with 30 contribution years combined between these two pension plans can get a pension of $1,000 a month at any age, paid pro-rata by the two funds.

This change is a partial victory in TDU's drive to extend the 30-and-out pension, established in 1985, on a fair basis. Specifically, certain groups of Teamsters previously discriminated against by unjust restrictions have reason to be happy. Chicago-based carhaulers who were switched from plan to plan; UPS members in Kentucky, Michigan and Iowa who were switched from plan to plan; and all Teamsters (especially road drivers) who spent part of their years in 710 and part in CSPF due to changes of operations, all these Teamsters should now be eligible for 30-and-out, provided they have a total of 30 combination years in the two pension plans.

There still are unjust restrictions hurting other Teamsters. Hopefully these can be tackled as well.

The next time someone tells you "nothing can ever be done" to improve our union, tell them about this change. And then ask them to join TDU. Because we have a long way to go!

Jersey Pension Win

continued from page 1

were—dozens of members turned out at the meeting with letters in hand showing that their benefits were being slashed by the rule changes.

TDU lawyers immediately began investigating the situation while members hit the streets with flyers warning members of the rule change and seeking their support. Armed with the knowledge that a similar case had recently been won by TDU in Western Pennsylvania and the discovery that the rule changes violated federal law regulating pension funds, the stage was set to present the case to the trustees of the funds.

Almost immediately, the Local 641 fund changed their rules back, and the Local 617 fund informed TDU that they are planning to. Local 560 has continued to stall, and TDU attorneys have given notice that they will take it to court unless promised pension benefit levels are restored.

But the biggest gain in this effort is that New Jersey Teamster members have shown that with perseverence, legal and organizing backup, and rank and file action, the members can accomplish something. Hopefully this will help lift the blanket of fear that New Jersey members have had to contend with.

As Local 560 member Arthur "Smitty" Smith said with confidence, "We want everyone to know that TDU is fighting for full pension benefits for everyone, and that through our regional TDU office we are helping all New Jersey Teamsters get the benefits they are entitled to."

This pension effort really shows the spirit of TDU members, shows that they are out there building confidence, informing members, getting people to work together, and most important, that they are *winning*.

Carhaul Stewards: Please Post

How to Collect Correct Wages

This article on the importance and means of enforcing your contract was written by former Detroit Local 299 BA H.C. Hulett, who has decades of experience in carhaul.

At many terminals we are faced with a major problem collecting our correct wages. If your pay is short, here is the best way to deal with it. Punch a card when you find a discrepancy in your pay, then get a miscellaneous pay form and contact management about the shortages or discrepancies. Remain at the terminal until a correction is made. Then turn in for the time spent correcting their mistake. Don't be put off. Don't let them take information and promise to get back to you.

When you have a problem with the correct method of pay for a competitive, insist on seeing a copy of the competitive agreement you are being paid under. Then contact you steward or BA.

When you are instructed to perform any tasks, note the time and have the supervisor who issues the instructions sign for the time and indicate his instructions.

When issued permits ask for instructions on what to do and have the instructions signed for and the time noted. Put in for any time you spend.

Our union at the upper levels is failing to define our job classifications, and is refusing to allow us to enforce it. So the only way we can collect for work performed is to document the extra time and demand payment. Ultimately we as employees will determine whether we are paid for our time or not. If most people ignore this and don't turn in for it, then sooner or later it will become part of the job and will not be collectible.

Seniority is the backbone of unionism. Since we often take for granted its benefits, some members only notice it when they "suffer" from being below others. Many of today's union members weren't around when management routinely got rid of older employees when they were "worn out." And our union leadership does very little toward educating newer members. The protection all of us get from a seniority system will also be lost if we don't understand its importance and defend it in our workplaces. Seniority takes away from management the ability to bribe or blackmail employees.

"Favors" Undermine Contract

If an employee will endure breakdown without compensation, will allow management to mistreat him or her without complaint and will do special favors for management, then management will, at their whim, do special favors for this employee. These favors cost management nothing. But they do undermine our contract. Because every special favor the employer grants in one direction must be diverted from another. This takes away our contract right to treatment in a fair and equal manner. By encouraging employees to refrain from demanding contract enforcement and fair treatment, these favors undercut all aspects of our contract.

Each member must inform themselves concerning their situation and must make decisions based on the good of all members, not just as they apply individually. You may be able to increase your earnings for this week or this month by ignoring seniority today, but think further ahead about this industry as a career.

I think you will notice that terminals where the members stick together best and insist on contract enforcement are the same terminals where the most benefits have been retained for everyone. "Looking out for number one" is a popular idea, but for any union employee, this attitude will eventually cost every employee many of the benefits and protections we depend on.

There is no easy answer and rebuilding our union will take patience and persistence. The most important thing each member can do is attend their union meetings, and uphold the contract in every way.

Locals Pitted Against Locals

Competitive Vote Rules Weakened

In last summer's contract fight, the right for members to vote on competitives was the single biggest selling point of the employers' second offer. New "rules of procedure" released January 8, 1986 by the National Joint Committee will reduce the effect of those votes dramatically.

Article IV, Section A1b(3) of those procedures states: "Failure of ratification by the members of one local union does not prohibit implementation of the competitive relief by the employer by utilizing employees represented by any other local union whose members have approved the same competitive relief."

In practice this means that if one local holds out for better terms on a competitive proposal another local can simply vote yes and get all the traffic. How this squares with the equalization guarantees of the Central/Southern and Eastern supplements remains to be seen.

This already occured with respect to traffic between Wilmington and Kansas City hauled on a running mile basis. At least that was probably off-rail traffic. The worst impact of this change can be seen in a more recent deal involving traffic from the new Poletown plant in Detroit into Illinois, Wisconsin, and Chicago. Most Chicago traffic has been hauled fullrate and represents the cream of the work. Given the length of these trips and the time required for multiple skids in and around Chicago's low bridges, a full/half rate deal is no great shakes. It is also very doubtful this traffic would actually go on the rail.

Consultation between locals is essential to prevent locals being whipsawed against each other. Unfortunately, in the Poletown-Chicago case, Janesville Local 579 seems to have jumped the gun and is now hauling traffic on a full/half basis. Local 299 CCI drivers are understandably furious at being sandbagged.

The procedure for postponements has also been changed, requiring mutual agreement between the local and management, replacing a procedure where each side got one postponement if desired.

Stewards should obtain copies of the new procedures from their locals. We will be glad to supply copies at no charge for TDU members only and $1 for others.

Carhaul News Notes

Employees at Ryder Systems companies will be shocked to learn that carhaul honcho Ron Borges is not satisfied with honest cheating and was recently caught in the following con game: Borges went to Jacksonville Local 512 with a competitive proposal which he said had already been agreed to by Dayton Local 957. The next day he showed up in Dayton with the news that the deal had been signed to by Jacksonville so Local 957 might as well go along. Forunately the Local 957 BA had the sense to call Local 512 and Borges was caught in a lie. Think of Borges the next time Ryder righteously fires someone for dishonesty.

Meanwhile Local 957 members employed by CAT out of the Moraine, Ohio plant have finally had enough. They recently took a 92% strike vote because management can't break the habit of cheating employees by half-rating fullrate loads. Sam Stintsman is coming to town to put out the fire. Hopefully, he'll throw water on CAT and not the members of this local.

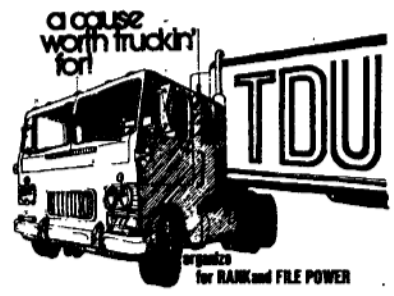
BA Billy Burrows of Nashville Local 327 has unfortunately confirmed our warnings about the new language on the flexible work week for mechanics. On December 18, Burrows gave NuCar the okay to start working mechanics on weekends without overtime pay. NuCar is also pushing the limits on its drivers by instructing them to "call in for possible ABC" before they haul their half-rate return. What they mean is hauling a local load out of eastern NuCar terminals, especially on Saturday, when these loads would ordinarily require weekend premium pay if hauled by Eastern Conference drivers.

Congratulations to **Shreveport CAT yard employees** for putting up a good fight against continuation of the piece rate contract that was imposed on them when the plant opened. Full timers there are outnumbered by part timers 27-5. When the contract came up, management raised the holiday and sick day pay from $60 to $105 to "buy" part-timers' votes. Fulltimers threw one wrench in the deal when they demanded Local 568 take action against 12 part-timers, including the son of the GM plant manager, for scabbing during the strike. The 12 were fined $500 and suspended from the union for 2 years on December 31. Eight other part-timers hadn't joined the union in this right to work state and couldn't vote on the cotract. In the final vote on the contract, it was approved by a 5 to 4 vote. The deal is reportedly being appealed to the joint committee.

Get your TDU Jacket or Vest

TDU jackets and vests are well-made and durable. They display a Teamster patch and American flag on the front, and the TDU "keep on trucking" logo, shown below, on the back. Jackets are lined and warm, and the vests are perfect for working on the dock on those cold days.

Lined Jackets $22.00
Vests $22.00
Sizes: XL, L, M, S. (Larger sizes available at slightly higher prices.)



I am enclosing $_____ for:

_____(no.) _____(size) Lined Jackets

_____(no.) _____(size) Vests

Name _____ Local_____

Address _____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Company _____ Phone_____

Mail to: TDU, P.O. Box 10128, Detroit, Michigan 48210

As I See It

Frank Greco
Local 478
Edison, New Jersey

The following article was submitted by New Jersey Teamster Frank Greco. Opposing viewpoints on this and other issues will be considered for publication contingent on space and time limitations.

Over the past two years there has been much discussion both for and against the expulsion of the Local 560 Executive Board, trustees and administrator of the welfare and other funds. Local 560 is considered the most corrupt local in the country.

In 1984, Judge Harold A. Ackerman agreed with the Justice Department that the "Provenzano group" had "extorted the membership's right to vote, speak and assemble by systematic acts of intimidation." This was done through murder, extortion, associations with reputed organized crime figures (Matty "The Horse" Ianniollo, just convicted of 43 counts of racketeering, mail fraud, and tax evasion), and the use of 560 as a revolving door for its officers to go from prison to 560 and back to prison. These acts had gone on since 1961, when Tony Provenzano took over the local by murdering his popular union rival and fellow officer Tony Castellitto. This is only one of four murders associated with "the group."

Judge Ackerman's decision was recently supported by the federal court of appeals, and is now before the U.S. Supreme Court.

There have been eight convictions of the three Provenzano brothers alone. The conviction of Sammy Provenzano, who is now serving time in federal prison for ripping off the benefit plan, is not even part of the present case. The criminal activity was so extensive, one more conviction was not necessary.

The mentality of the 560 officials is brought out in the testimony of former International VP, Eastern Conference official, Joint Council President, and 560 President Sam Provenzano, when he said that it was good for the members to have organized crime figures, such as the son of Al Tieri, around the union because of "what he can do for me." Mike Sciarra, the present president of Local 560 and Joint Council 73 official, testified he "prays" Tony Pro comes back despite his four convictions. These are only two examples of the convoluted mentality of the present executive board of 560. This mentality is not limited to 560. Over the years, there have been many convictions of IBT officers, including our International President Roy Williams, yet nothing has been done internally by the union. Their illegal activities are a green light for officers in other locals to do the same. Therefore, the only alternative to this desperate situation is for the members to take an active part and turn to law enforcement for help.

What is the mentality of the membership that dictates that the Justice Department should enforce the law with Jackie Presser but not with the "Provenzano group," which has a string of convictions as long as your arm?

At the present time, the officers of 560, who volunteered to represent the membership when they took the oath of office and accepted the statutory obligations that go with the office, have failed to restore the "extorted rights" of the members. The end result is Judge Ackerman's decision.

In conclusion, I feel there is no alternative to the present state of affairs in 560 except temporary trusteeship. Let us hope that the principles of union democracy such as free speech, election of union officials, grievance and contract committees, workshops on bylaws, the IBT constitution, the NLRA, etc., are instituted as part of the trusteeship. Educated unionists can and will structure their local democratically, so that it serves their needs regardless of who is in office. Let's all lend a helping hand to our brothers and sisters in 560. Solidarity at this time is a must.

Hollywood Local 399

Trusteeship Abused in Studio Drivers' Local

In his term as International President, Jackie Presser has appeared more willing than his predecessors to use the club of trusteeship to keep locals in line. However, his experiences in studio drivers' Local 399 of Hollywood, California just may cause him to think twice about using this tactic in the future.

The 3,500 member local has all of its membership in the film and television industry, and has national jurisdiction over that work. As one 399 member told *Convoy*, "The International really wants to control this local because there is so much money which flows through the entertainment industry, most of it in cash and very hard to trace. This is something that they really want to be in on."

The current turmoil in Local 399 began when rank and filer Nate Parks defeated Pete Diskin, the incumbent secretary-treasurer, in December 1984.

Parks took over a local which was more than $20,000 in the red, which was ineffective in representing its members, and which faced membership allegations of overwhelming favoritism and payoffs in the hiring hall. In six months, he managed to eliminate the debt, clean up the hiring hall, increase the size of the staff, organize several new bargaining units, and start regular classes and meetings for shop stewards.

However, the old "family" which had run the local and still controlled most of the executive board, began to agitate for trusteeship. Parks' cause was not helped by the fact that he turned down a personal request by Presser to find a job for the son of Norm Greene, head of the Teamster's retiree division. In June 1985, Presser put Local 399 in trusteeship, and appointed International Organizer Earl Bush, of Seattle, as trustee. Since taking over, Bush has managed to set the local back years.

In August, he renegotiated the industry-wide contract, and agreed to a system which allows no new people to be added to the studio's seniority lists. All new hires from now on will be permanent casuals. Bush has also verbally agreed (apparently) to allow several independent producers to bypass the hiring hall altogether.

Bush announced in January that he had appointed a new executive board, with himself as secretary treasurer. He went on to amaze the members by telling them that he plans to run for office when the trusteeship ends, even though he has never worked in the industry and will have only been in the local for 18 months.

Already, members are organizing to run against Bush's hand-picked slate for the delegates to the 1986 IBT Convention, and he will also face tough opposition in the December local election.

UPS Air To Be 100% Part-time?

UPS admits they want all of the Next Day Air operation to be part-time. At a recent Challenge of the 80s meeting in New Hampshire, members were treated to the news from management that it is their intention to eventually run the entire NDA operation with part-time workers: feeder drivers, delivery work and all other work.

Surprised? It's no news that Presser, Dan Darrow and the rest of the International UPS committee have essentially given the green light to go local by local to get part-time drivers for late NDA packages. So far, the company has been successful in some locals in the south, some western states, Wisconsin and parts of Michigan, while other areas have resisted the company's plan.

The IBT has given UPS the foot on the door they want to eventually push through their plan for 100% part-time workforce in NDA, resulting in a further loss of top-rate, fulltime jobs, and greater divisions between members. What can be done to stop this trend?

1. If your local has not yet agreed to relief on NDA, keep the pressure on them to resist giving in. If your local has agreed, urge them to re-negotiate with UPS for a better deal or to end the use of part-time drivers at lower wage rates.

2. Urge your local to work with other locals to resist this relief. Many locals have refused the deal.

New Materials from the UPS Committee

The UPS Committee of TDU has published two new materials that should be of interest to all UPS Teamsters. A special postcard (pictured above) is pre-addressed to the television news programs *60 Minutes* asking them to investigate working conditions and UPS's relationship to the Teamsters Union. Price: 10¢ a piece. Also available is a new brochure explaining what UPS/TDUers have done and outlining our goals for the coming year. The brochure is free.

☐ Send me _____60 Minutes postcards. Enclosed is $_____.

☐ Send me _____UPS brochures.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____ Zip _____

Phone # ( ) _____

Send to: **TDU, Box 10128, Detroit, MI 48210**

Write-in Campaign, Recruitment Lay Groundwork for 1987

UPS Committee Sets Sights on Contract

Lou Woodward
United Parcel Service
TDU/UPS Steering Committee
Largo, Florida

With the Christmas rush over for another year, UPS Teamsters should start giving some serious thought to our next contract. September, 1987 may seem like a long way off, but we should all remember how Jackie Presser and UPS brought in the contract extension a year before our last contract expiration date.

Now is really the time to start laying the groundwork for getting a good contract the next time around. We should be thinking about what we want, start exchanging ideas with people in our own hubs and centers, and keep reaching out to people from other areas.

One good step could be exchanging supplements from our different areas. Most of our supplements are fairly similar regarding wages, but there are substantial differences between other conditions like holidays, vacations, sick leave, breaks, lunch periods, grievance procedure and other important issues. By comparing supplements we can find good language to push for in all supplements. The Northern California Supplement, for example, has a total of thirteen paid holidays. The Northern California, New York Local 804 and New Jersey Local 177 Supplements have "innocent until proven guilty," which keeps fired employees on the job until their case is heard.

With other UPS Teamsters already enjoying these conditions, it is not excessive to ask for them in every supplement.

One thing that the 1984 contract extension showed us was that an organized membership is the only thing that can put pressure on for a decent contract. In most areas where there was a strong TDU chapter or good local officials, opposition to the 1984 extension was strong and unity was good. In areas where we had few contacts and organization was low, the extension passed by a much higher margin. We've got to strengthen the areas where we have people, and reach out to more centers.

As contract time draws closer, holding meetings with workers at other centers and hubs will be a big help. If done to draw in a wider selection of contract proposal ideas, it will also let our locals know that the requests come from a large cross section of the membership.

Over the next year and a half the UPS Committee of TDU will be doing what it can to reach out to more UPS Teamsters and prepare for the contract. One thing is for sure: the only way that we will get a better contract is to be informed and organized, and unless we want Presser to have the only say in negotiating our contract, now is the time for us to start. Don't wait for someone else to do it for you!

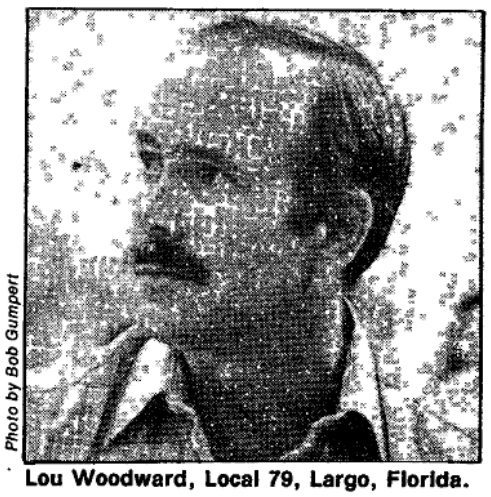


Photo by Bob Gumpert

Lou Woodward, Local 79, Largo, Florida.

Local 710 Bends to Legal and Organizing Pressure

Indy UPSers Win Union Meetings

In January Indianapolis UPS Teamsters were informed that Chicago Local 710 had finally agreed to set up an office and conduct union meetings and grievance hearings in Indianapolis. Over 200 members were on hand for the announcement made by Local 710 Sec. Treas. Bill Joyce.

"This is just what we were pushing for," said Indianapolis Local 710 member Jerry Westgerdes. "We are finally starting to see some of the fruits of our labor."

An extensive network of TDU members in Indiana, Illinois and Davenport, Iowa has grown and organized over the last several years over the need for better representation for outstate UPS members. Outstate meetings and hearings were also part of the platform of the Eagle slate, which ran against Joyce this past fall.

Because of this decision Indianapolis UPS members will be able to attend union meetings and have their grievances heard at a location convenient for them. Up until now all of the 4,000 UPS members in Indiana, Illinois and Davenport have had to go to Chicago for meetings and grievance hearings, a severe obstacle to participating in the local union affairs.

Still up in the air is whether the local will be willing to make the same positive steps for outstate Illinois and other members still at great distances from either Chicago or Indianapolis. When Joyce was questioned at the Indianapolis meeting about setting up meetings in Evansville he said that it would be considered.

TDUers in Illinois, urged on by the victory in Indianapolis, have started a petition circulating that asks the local to "have union meetings and grievance hearings conducted at as many outstate locations as possible." Copies of the petition are available from the TDU office. Contact us immediately to order some.

Local 710 UPS members are also awaiting the harvest of another fruit of their hard work. A lawsuit filed by members and handled by TDU lawyer Tom Geoghegan seeks a mail-in vote on bylaw amendments. The Federal Appeals Court ruled in favor of the suit in October and an appeal by union officials to the Supreme Court is expected to be rejected in the near future, paving the way for a fairer voting procedure on bylaws' amendments.

UPS and Downs

Allentown Drivers Vote No on Part-Time Cover Drivers.

Despite highly questionable tactics used by UPS to get its way, Allentown Local 773 package car drivers recently rejected by 38-7 a company proposal that cover drivers be lower paid part-timers for most of the year. Last year the drivers voted down a similar proposal, but the company decided to give it another shot after changing the vacation bids so that fewer drivers would get summer vacations. Before the vote, the local relayed the message from UPS that the summer bids might be changed back depending on the results of the vote.

TDUers were prepared to file charges with the National Labor Relations Board over the company's actions, but following the vote results decided to hold off on them. After the vote the business agent announced that this would be the last time the issue would be voted on.

Locals 776 and 639 Win Compensation Issue.

The practice by UPS of deducting workers' compensation money from vacation pay has been stopped in Harrisburg Local 776 and Washington D.C. area Local 639. Grievances filed did the trick. In Local 639 the case was originally filed in 1983 and the arbitrator based his final decision on the fact that the company had made the change in the middle of the contract, and that there was no language justifying the action. A similar grievance was won by a Philadelphia Local 623 member in 1984.

UPS Stealing Chicago Feeder Jobs Through Subcontracting.

For some 12 years UPS has been following the practice of using non-UPS trailers to ship some loads from the east to Chicago, unloading the trailers in Chicago, and then turning them back over to the company they originated from. The deal works out well for both parties—UPS gets the use of the trailers and the companies get their trailers into the midwest at no cost.

For those same 12 years Chicago Local 705 feeder drivers have hauled the trailers back to the rail yard after they were unloaded, but now UPS is trying to take that work away by giving it to non-union "vendors." Starting on February 6 Bedford Park UPS began subcontracting one trailer a day, a clear violation of the contract. Bedford Park members have responded by having a different driver file a grievance for the lost time each day.

So far, there has been no response from either the local or the company, but the drivers intend to keep filing grievances to keep the heat on, and are prepared to build the pressure to stop this loss of union drivers' work.

St. Louis and Cincinnati UPSers Win Special Meetings.

UPS Teamsters in both St. Louis and Cincinnati recently organized successfully to win monthly UPS jurisdictional meetings. Concern has been high in both cities over increasing productivity harassment. In St. Louis a number of firings in the package car department over trumped up charges spurred support for the monthly meetings. At their first one over 100 members showed up to discuss the problems.

Cincinnati members also were unable to get monthly craft meetings, and have begun to set up a special "firing fund" to protect members fired by the company.

Jacksonville Feeder Drivers Win Grievance.

An important grievance filed by Jacksonville, Florida feeder drivers over the assigning of overtime has been won. The grievance charged that feeder drivers working the 4-10 work week should be offered work on their days off before it is offered to yard people. The company had been assigning runs previously done completely by specific feeder drivers to yard people, with the result that the feeder drivers were making less than was previously possible under the five day work week.

A similar grievance was filed and won in Orlando last year, where the 4-10 workweek is also being used. While feelings about the 4-10 week seem to be mixed, with some drivers liking it and others not, a number of problems like this arise that require action on the part of the drivers to be solved.